

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MBFR V 00026 031516Z

53

ACTION ACDA-10

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INFO USMISSION NATO

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USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0026

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: NETHERLANDS POSITION ON MBFR DATA

REF: USNATO 0536

1. WE WELCOME NETHERLANDS INITIATIVE ON THE QUESTION OF DATA EXCHANGE WITH THE EAST WHICH INCLUDES HELPFUL ANALYSIS, BUT CONSIDER IT PREMATURE FOR ALLIES TO SEEK TO REACH DECISIONS ON THIS ISSUE NOW AND SUGGEST THAT THIS BE POSITION THAT US TAKES AT NATO.

2. OUR REASONS ARE:

A. AT THE PRESENT STAGE OF THE MBFR TALKS, A REQUIREMENT FOR EXCHANGE OF DATA TO DETERMINE THE STARTING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MBFR V 00026 031516Z

POINT OF THE FORCES DOES NOT FORM A FORMAL PART OF THE

WESTERN POSITION. IT IS NOT WRITTEN INTO THE BASIC ALLIED POSITION PAPER, NOR HAVE THE ALLIES IN VIENNA, IN DISCUSSING WITH THE EAST THE DESIRABILITY OF DATA EXCHANGE MADE AGREEMENT ON DATA A FORMAL PRECONDITION FOR AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS.

B. AT PRESENT, THE ALLIED POSITION ON DATA IS A TACTIC VIS-A-VIS THE EAST, A WAY OF PUSHING THE EAST IN AN AREA WHERE THE LATTER IS ADMITTEDLY ON THE DEFENSIVE.

C. EVEN THOUGH THE EASTERN REACTION THUS FAR HAS BEEN NEGATIVE, IT IS NOT EXCLUDED THAT THE EAST MIGHT AT SOME POINT AGREE TO AN EXCHANGE OF DATA. THERE HAVE BEEN INDICATIONS THAT THE EAST IS STILL INTERNALLY CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF EXCHANGING DATA PRIOR TO AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS. MOREOVER, KHLESTOV AND OTHER EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE REPEATEDLY STATED THAT THEY WOULD "DISCUSS" DATA AFTER AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON REDUCTIONS IS REACHED. WE DO NOT KNOW SPECIFICALLY WHAT THE EAST HAS IN MIND AS REGARDS THIS STATEMENT. BUT THE PRESENT STATUS OF EAST-WEST DISCUSSION ON DATA IN VIENNA IS IN ANY EVENT NOT SUCH THAT IT COULD BE SAID TO BLOCK DISCUSSION OF OR AGREEMENT ON REDUCTIONS.

D. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE EAST WOULD AT SOME POINT AGREE TO AN EXCHANGE OF DATA, IT MANIFESTLY WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO HAVE AN AGREED STARTING POINT FOR REDUCTIONS.

E. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THE PROCESS OF DATA COMPARISON MIGHT PROVIDE AN OBJECTIVE BASIS FOR ADJUSTING THE SIZE OF THE GAP BETWEEN TOTAL ALLIED AND WARSAW PACT FORCES.

F. GIVEN THESE CONSIDERATIONS AND ALSO THE RATHER EXTREME NATURE OF THEIR PRESENT REDUCTION PROPOSALS VIS-A-VIS THE EAST WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO TALK REDUCTIONS IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THE ALLIES IN VIENNA SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO REMAIN ON THE OFFENSIVE ON THIS TOPIC. AS WE READ IT, THIS IS THE VIEW OF THE AD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MBFR V 00026 031516Z

HOC GROUP, EXPECIALLY OF THE UK AND FRG REPS.

G. THE ALLIES WILL AT SOME POINT HAVE TO AGREE AMONG THEMSELVES ON THE QUESTION OF WHAT FIGURES IT IS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE AGREEMENT ON WITH THE EAST AS A BASIS FOR AN AGREEMENT AND ON THE QUESTION OF WHICH FIGURES SHOULD BE SET FORTH IN THE TEXT OF AN AGREEMENT.

H. IT IS PREFERABLE THAT DISCUSSION OF THIS TOPIC SHOULD BE BASED ON A US POSITION WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED. THE DELEGATION WILL SHORTLY SUBMIT A PAPER ON THE SUBJECT AS A CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNAL US DISCUSSION.

I. MOREOVER, ALLIED DECISIONS AS TO WHAT DEGREE OF AGREEMENT WITH THE EAST ON DATA IS ESSENTIAL SHOULD BE BASED ON A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING THAN IS NOW AVAILABLE ON THE SHAPE OF A FIRST REDUCTION AGREEMENT.

J. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE AND TIME-CONSUMING, DIVERTING THE ALLIES FROM OTHER MORE ESSENTIAL TASKS SUCH AS AIR MANPOWER, FOR THE SPC TO BEGIN DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE NOW.

K. WE THEREFORE SUGGEST USNATO WELCOME NETHERLANDS INITIATIVE BUT ASSIGN IT LOW PRIORITY AND AVOID ACTIVE DISCUSSION AT PRESENT, ALSO AVOIDING SPC ACTIONS WHICH MIGHT INHIBIT ALLIED TACTICAL FREEDOM IN VIENNA.RESOR

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